

Message Text

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17

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 IO-11 OMB-01 /087 W

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R 271355Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7444

INFO AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, GB

SUBJ: PRESIDENT BONGO'S PRESS CONFERENCE

1. PRESIDENT BONGO RETURNED TO LIBREVILLE MORNING OF FEB. 26 AFTER ANNUAL "WINTER SPORTS" VACATION IN FRANCE. IN AIRPORT PRESS CONFERENCE, BONGO REITERATED NUMBER OF STATEMENTS THAT HE HAS BEEN MAKING TO PARIS MEDIA DURING LAST TWO WEEKS.

2. SOME OF HIGHLIGHTS OF PRESIDENT'S REMARKS WERE:

A) REAFFIRMATION THAT GABON WILL VOTE AGAINST DEBATE ON SPANISH SAHARA IN OAU;

B) EXPRESSION OF REGRET AT RECENT EVENTS IN NIGERIA FOLLOWED BY GRATUITOUSLY IRRITATING AND RATHER MACABRE REMARKS THAT GENERAL MUHAMMED ASSASSINATION WAS A CASE OF A THIEF ROBBING A THIEF;

C) STATEMENT THAT HE BELIEVED FRANCE WAS MAKING MISTAKE WITH ITS POLICY TOWARD MAYOTTE AND THE COMORES;

D) BUT THAT FRENCH POLICY FOR DECOLONIZATION OF TFAI (DJIBOUTI) WAS CORRECT AND SHOULD BE PUSHED AHEAD AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE.

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3. SPEAKING OF PRACTICAL RESULTS OF WHAT WAS PRIMARILY VACATION TRIP, PRESIDENT ALSO NOTED THAT HE AND GISCARD D'ESTAING HAD DISCUSSED FRENCH TRAINING FOR GABONESE PILOTS AND MECHANICS FOR THE FIVE MIRAGES THAT GABON IS BUYING AND THAT DETAILS OF TRAINING WOULD BE WORKED OUT BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TWO COUNTRIES' ARMED SERVICES. FINALLY, HE REPORTED REACHING AGREEMENT WITH BUSINESSMEN FOR INSTALLATION OF NEW CEMENT PLANT WHICH WILL DOUBLE CURRENT GABONESE PRODUCTION AND FOR BUILDING 250 HOUSES IN LIBREVILLE. COMMENT: THIS WAS WELCOME NEWS AS BOTH HOUSING AND CEMENT HAVE BECOME CRITICALLY SCARCE AND SCARCITY CAUSING SERIOUS BOTTLENECK IN PLAN TO TURN LIBREVILLE INTO "MODERN CAPITAL THAT GABON DESERVES".

4. BONGO'S REMARKS ON ANGOLA BEING REPORTED SEPTTEL STEIGMAN

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